Whither Rubūbiyyah?

On Recent Salafī Revisionism and the Position of Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb on the Arab Polytheists' Affirmation of Tawḥid al-Rubūbiyyah

By: Salman Nasir

Some recent debates have brought to the forefront the issue of the Jāhilī polytheists' affirmation of Allāh's Lordship (*Rubūbiyyah*). It is noteworthy that some Salafī scholars and polemicists increasingly do not agree with the more well-known, traditional Salafī position that the Arab pagans affirmed Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah (in full).[1]

This standard position is the position of Sh. Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb himself, and it plays a central role in how he argues for his unique paradigm on Shirk al-ʿIbādah. Many of these modern Salafī scholars seem to think it is just a minor detail which they can freely revise without significant consequence. As this revisionist approach becomes more common, it also appears that many Salafīs involved in polemics are unaware that this was even his stated position.

Two key features of Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's writing are that:

(1) He repeatedly and unequivocally affirm that the Jāhilī Arabs possessed Tawḥīd in Rubūbiyyah;
(2) and he relies on this claim as a key pillar in his argument that their shirk was shirk in worship (ʿibādah), not shirk in rubūbiyyah.

Without this premise, the argument that he builds on it collapses. Therefore, a rejection of this position necessitates that his argument in favour of his paradigm is fundamentally flawed.

In this article, I will lay out his position clearly, and then provide a Quote Bank that collects a large sample of quotes from his writings in order to demonstrate that these positions are clearly articulated in his writings.

The central argument of Sh. Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb can be summarised as follows (as substantiated from his own statements):

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[1] As an example, see: Sh. Sulṭān al-ʿUmayrī, *Taḥqīq al-Ifādah bi Taḥrīr Mafhūm al-ʿIbādah*, pp. 19-27. It is noteworthy however that he attributes this traditional position to some contemporary Salafī scholars such as Sh. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Bāz and Sh. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Rājiḥī, two very senior and well-respected Saudi scholars but makes no mention of this being the position of Sh. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb.

(1) There are two fundamental categories of Tawḥīd: Tawḥid al-Rubūbiyyah and Tawḥid al-ʿIbādah (also known as Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah).
(2) The verses of the Qurʾān prove conclusively that the Jāhilī Arabs affirmed Tawḥīd in Rubūbiyyah **completely.**
(3) The Qurʾān nevertheless condemns the Jāhilī Arabs as mushriks.
(4) If the Jāhilī Arabs were mushriks, but not guilty of Shirk in Rububiyyah, then their Shirk must be of another kind, namely: Shirk in ʿIbadah (also called Shirk in Ulūhiyyah).
(5) Consequently, his contemporaries claiming to follow Islam and affirming Tawḥīd in Rubūbiyyah **completely** is not sufficient to make them Muslims, because they perform acts of "worship" to other than Allah and thus are guilty of the same crime as the Jāhilī mushriks: **Shirk al-ʿIbādah.**

If the Jāhilī Arabs were guilty of any form of shirk in Rubūbiyyah, this would fundamentally undermine his argument. Someone who has set up a partner with God in His Rubūbiyyah does not have "partial" **Tawḥīd in Rubūbiyyah**; he has **Shirk in Rubūbiyyah.** This is Shirk which takes a person outside of the fold of Islām.

This is why this issue is central to his argument. Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's opponents were insisting that the people he condemns as mushriks for acts of "worship" directed to other than Allah cannot be guilty of Shirk so long as they are free of what he would call **Shirk al-Rubūbiyyah.** In other words, according to them, **Shirk al-Rubūbiyyah** must accompany such actions in order to count as Shirk at all; **Shirk al-ʿIbādah** is not an independent category of Shirk.

His strategy to counter this is to prove from the Qurʾān that Shirk can exist in the absence of **Shirk al-Rubūbiyyah**. He does this by arguing that the very Jāhilī Arabs whom the Qurʾān condemns as mushriks possessed **<u>complete</u> Tawḥid in Rubūbiyyah**—just like his Muslim opponents**.** He proceeds by establishing a one-to-one correspondence between the Shirk of his contemporaries and that of the Jāhilī Arabs, which requires negating any difference between them on Tawḥid in Rubūbiyyah.

If, as the revisionists would have us believe, Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb only meant that the pagans affirmed the foundation (*aṣl*) of rubūbiyyah, then his argument does not follow. His polemic requires a tight parallel:

(1) the Jāhilī mushrikūn affirmed Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah;

(2) his opponents affirm Tawḥīd al-rubūbiyyah;

(3) therefore, Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah cannot be what distinguishes the *muwaḥḥid* from the *mushrik* as the Jāhilī Arabs already possessed it but were still condemned as mushriks; the distinction must lie in worship (*ʿibādah*).

But that parallel only works if "affirming rubūbiyyah" means the same thing in both cases. If the pagans merely affirmed the foundation of Rubūbiyyah, while his opponents affirm Tawḥid al-Rubūbiyyah in full, then the two cases are not comparable—and the analogy becomes **qiyās maʿa al-fāriq (an invalid analogy due to substantive difference between the two scenarios)**.

Likewise, if the Jāhilī Arabs were guilty of any meaningful "partial shirk" in rubūbiyyah, then the entire example loses its intended evidentiary force. The example is meant to show that **shirk al-ʿibādah can exist even when shirk al-rubūbiyyah is absent**. Once shirk in rubūbiyyah is present, the Jāhilī case can no longer function as proof of that claim, and the argument built upon it collapses.

Quote Bank

The quotations provided are only a sampling of his statements in this regard and not an attempt to comprehensively present all his relevant statements. In presenting the quotations, it is helpful to give an overview of the points they establish. The quotations below show, repeatedly and in multiple contexts, the following (they are cited as Q1, Q2, etc.):

(1) **Two categories of Tawḥīd.** Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb divides Tawḥīd into two kinds: **Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah** and **Tawḥīd al-Ilāhiyyah / Tawḥīd al-ʿIbādah.**[2] (Q1, Q5)

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[2] He does sometimes divide Tawḥīd into three categories, as in the following passage from a short treatise in *al-Durar al-Saniyyah* (2/68-69):

الأصل الثالث: وهو توحيد الذات والأسماء والصفات كما قال تعالى: {قل هو الله أحد الله الصمد لم يلد ولم يولد ولم يكن له كفوا أحد} [سورة الإخلاص] ، وقوله تعالى: {ولله الأسماء الحسنى فادعوه بها وذروا الذين يلحدون في أسمائه سيجزون ما كانوا يعملون} [سورة الأعراف: ١٨٠] ، وقال تعالى: {ليس كمثله شيء وهو السميع البصير} [سورة الشورى: ١١].

The third foundation: namely, *Tawḥīd of Essence (al-dhāt), and of Names and Attributes (al-asmāʾ wa'l-ṣifāt)*, as Allāh—Most High—says: *"Say: He is Allāh, One. Allāh, the Ever-Besought. He neither begets nor is begotten, and there is none comparable to Him."* (112: 1–4); and: *"To Allāh belong the most beautiful names, so call upon Him by them, and leave those who deviate concerning His names; they will be recompensed for what they used to do."* (7:180); and: *"There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing."* (42:11).

And he says the following in a *fatwā* in *al-Durar al-Saniyyah* (2/72-73):

سئل الشيخ، رحمه الله: عن توحيد الربوبية وتوحيد الألوهية وتوحيد الصفات، فأجاب:

توحيد الربوبية: هو الذي أقر به الكفار، كما في قوله تعالى: {قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالأَرْضِ أَمَّنْ يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالأَبْصَارَ وَمَنْ يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَمَنْ يُدَبِّرُ الأَمْرَ فَسَيَقُولُونَ اللَّهُ فَقُلْ أَفَلا تَتَّقُونَ} .

وأما توحيد الألوهية: فهو إخلاص العبادة لله وحده، عن جميع الخلق، لأن الإله في كلام العرب هو الذي يقصد للعبادة; وكانوا يقولون: إن الله سبحانه هو إله الآلهة، لكن يجعلون معه آلهة أخرى، مثل: الصالحين والملائكة وغيرهم، يقولون: إن الله يرضى هذا، ويشفعون لنا عنده. فإذا عرفت هذا معرفة جيدة، تبين لك غربة الدين. وقد استدل عليهم سبحانه بإقرارهم بتوحيد الربوبية على بطلان مذهبهم، لأنه، إذا كان هو المدبر وحده، وجميع من سواه لا يملكون مثقال ذرة، فكيف يدعون معه غيره مع إقرارهم بهذا؟

وأما توحيد الصفات: فلا يستقيم توحيد الربوبية ولا توحيد الألوهية إلا بالإقرار بالصفات، لكن الكفار أعقل ممن أنكر الصفات. والله أعلم.

The Shaykh (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked about Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah, Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah, and Tawḥīd al-Ṣifāt, and he replied:
Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah: it is that which the disbelievers affirmed...
As for Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah: it is to devote worship sincerely to Allah alone, to the exclusion of all created beings. For in the language of the Arabs, an *ilāh* is that which is intended for worship. They used to say: Allah—Exalted is He—is the God of the gods, yet they would still place alongside Him other gods, such as the righteous, the angels, and others besides them. They would say: Allah is pleased with this, and they will intercede for us with Him. Once you understand this well, it becomes clear to you how strange the religion has become. God—Exalted is He—argued against them by way of their own acceptance of Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah, exposing the falsity of their position: for if He alone is the One who governs, and everyone besides Him does not possess even the weight of an atom, then how can they call upon others alongside Him while acknowledging this? =

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(2) **Rubūbiyyah alone is not enough for Islam.** He repeatedly states that affirming rubūbiyyah **does not by itself make a person Muslim**, because even the mushrikūn (and "most of mankind") already concede this. (Q1, Q4, Q5, Q6)

(3) **The Jāhilī Arabs affirmed Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah.** He repeatedly argues that the Qurʾān itself shows the Jāhilī mushrikūn affirmed Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah in a comprehensive sense. (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q5, Q6)

(4) **Yet they were still condemned and fought.** Despite conceding rubūbiyyah, the Qurʾān condemns them as mushrikūn and the Prophet (ﷺ) fought them. Therefore, in his framework, their problem was not rubūbiyyah. (Q1, Q2, Q6)

(5) **Their shirk was in worship, not in rubūbiyyah.** He explicitly locates their shirk in **ʿibādah/ulūhiyyah**. (Q1, Q2, Q6)

(6) **The nature of their "gods".** They saw their "gods" not as creators or providers, but as **intermediaries** sought for **intercession (shafāʿah)** and **nearness (taqarrub)**. (Q2, Q5, Q8)

(7) **Shirk al-ʿIbādah consists of acts** such as directing **duʿāʾ**, **vows**, **sacrifice**, **istiġāthah**, and similar acts to other than Allah—even while affirming Rubūbiyyah for Allah alone. (Q2, Q6)

(8) ***Lā ilāha illā Allāh* is not about Rubūbiyyah.** He explicitly rejects interpretations of lā ilāha illā Allāh that render it a statement concerning Rubūbiyyah ("none creates, none provides…"). (Q2, Q4; implied by Q1)

(9) **This is a decisive (*muḥkam*) Qurʾānic teaching.** The premise that "the mushrikūn accepted Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah yet committed shirk through attachment to intermediaries" is **muḥkam**—clear and not open to being reinterpreted away—and this is a sufficient answer to all ambiguous **(mutashābih)** proof-texts used by his opponents. (Q7)

(10) **His polemical target: "We only seek the righteous as intercessors."** He argues that the contemporary claim "we affirm rubūbiyyah fully, but we seek the righteous only for intercession" is **the same claim the earlier mushrikūn**

= As for Tawḥīd al-Ṣifāt: Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah and Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah cannot be sound except by affirming the attributes; **yet the disbelievers are more sensible than those who deny the attributes.** And Allah knows best.

In this *fatwā*, his words imply that the Jāhilī Arabs affirmed God's Attributes (*Ṣifāt*) in a way that did not affect Tawḥid al-Rubūbiyyah. Whatever the case, it is clear that his argument concerning Tawḥīd al-Ulūhiyyah remains dependent on the idea that they affirmed Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah.

However, in most places in his writings, he simply places Tawḥīd in two categories, and this approach is particularly evident in his arguments that the shirk of the Jāhilī Arabs was in *Ulūhiyyah.*

made—so there is no difference between the Jāhili mushriks and his opponents in his time. (Q8, Q5)

Taken altogether, these quotations show the role of the "rubūbiyyah" premise in his framework: the Qurʾān's condemnation of the Jāhilī Arabs who completely affirm **Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah** yet are still condemned as **mushrikūn** demonstrates that **shirk al-ʿibādah can exist without shirk al-rubūbiyyah**. Rejecting that premise amounts to pulling out the pole holding up the tent. (Particularly see: Q2, Q6, Q7, Q8)

QUOTE 1

التوحيد نوعان: توحيدُ الربوبية، وهو أن الله سبحانه متفرِّدٌ بالخلق والتدبير عن الملائكة والأنبياء وغيرهم، وهذا حقٌّ لا بدَّ منه؛ لكن لا يُدخِلُ الرجلَ في الإسلام، **بل أكثرُ الناس مقرُّون به،** قال الله تعالى: ﴿قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالأَرْضِ أَمَّنْ يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالأَبْصَارَ وَمَنْ يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَمَنْ يُدَبِّرُ الأَمْرَ فَسَيَقُولُونَ اللَّهُ فَقُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ﴾ وإنَّ الذي يُدخِلُ الرجلَ في الإسلام هو توحيدُ الإلهية، وهو أن لا يُعبدَ إلا الله، لا مَلَكًا مقرَّبًا ولا نبيًّا مُرسَلًا.

وذلك أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بُعِثَ والجاهلية يعبدون أشياء مع الله: فمنهم من يعبد الأصنام، ومنهم من يدعو عيسى، ومنهم من يدعو الملائكة؛ فنهاهم عن هذا، وأخبرهم أن الله أرسله لِيُوَحَّدَ؛ ولا يُدْعَى أحدٌ لا الملائكة ولا الأنبياء، فمن اتبعه ووحد الله: فهو الذي شهد أن لا إله إلا الله، ومن عصاه ودعا عيسى أو الملائكة واستنصرهم، والتجأ إليهم فهو الذي جحد لا إله إلا الله مع إقراره أنه لا يخلق ولا يرزق إلا هو.

Tawḥīd is of two kinds:

Tawḥīd of Lordship (Rubūbiyyah), which is to affirm that Allah—exalted is He—is uniquely singular in creation and the governance of all affairs, to the exclusion of angels, prophets, and all others. **This is a truth that cannot be denied, but it does not enter a person into Islam, because most of mankind already acknowledge it.** Allah Most High says: *"Say: Who provides for you from the heaven and the earth, or who controls hearing and sight, and who brings forth the living from the dead, and who directs the affair? They will say: Allah. So say: Will you not then take heed (of Him)?"* (10:31).

Rather, what admits a person into Islam is Tawḥīd of Divinity (Ilāhiyyah): that none should be worshipped except Allah—neither a near angel nor a sent prophet.

This is because the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) was sent while (the people of) Jāhiliyyah were worshipping various things alongside Allah: among them were those who worshipped idols, those who invoked Jesus, and those who invoked the angels. He forbade them from this and informed them that Allah had sent him so that Allah alone would be affirmed as One, and so that none would be invoked besides Him—neither angels nor prophets. Whoever followed him and affirmed Allah's oneness is the one who truly testified, "There is no deity but Allah." As for whoever disobeyed him—invoking Jesus or the angels, seeking their help and turning to them—he thereby repudiated "There is no deity but Allah," despite conceding that none creates and none provides except Him.

Reference: Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Jawāhir al-Muḍiyyah li-Mujaddid al-Daʿwah al-Najdiyyah* (included in the *Majmūʿat al Rasāʾil wa l Masāʾil al Najdiyyah*), 3rd ed. (Riyadh: Dār al ʿĀṣimah, 1412 AH), pp. 2–3. He also repeats the same almost verbatim in a letter in: *al-Rasāʾil al-Shakhṣiyyah* (included in *Muʾallafāt al Shaykh Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb*, vol. 6), ed. Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān and Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ al-ʿAylaqī (Riyadh: Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University, n.d.), pp. 64–65.

QUOTE 2

فبعث الله محمدا صلى الله عليه وسلم يجدد لهم دين أبيهم إبراهيم، ويخبرهم أن هذا التقرب والاعتقاد محضُ حق الله تعالى لا يصلح منه شيء لا لملك مقرب ولا لنبي مرسل، فضلا عن غيرهما، **وإلا فهؤلاء المشركون يشهدون أن الله هو الخالق وحده لا شريك له، وأنه لا يخلق ولا يرزق إلا هو، ولا يحيي ولا يميت إلا هو، وأن جميع السماوات السبع ومن فيهن، والأرضين السبع ومن فيهن كلهم عبيده وتحت تصرفه وقهره.**

فإذا أردت الدليل على أن هؤلاء المشركين الذين قاتلهم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يشهدون بهذا، فاقرأ قوله تعالى: {قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالأَرْضِ أَمَّنْ يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالأَبْصَارَ وَمَنْ يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَمَنْ يُدَبِّرُ الأَمْرَ فَسَيَقُولُونَ اللَّهُ فَقُلْ أَفَلا تَتَّقُونَ}. وقوله تعالى: {قُلْ لِمَنِ الأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلا تَذَكَّرُونَ قُلْ مَنْ رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلا تَتَّقُونَ قُلْ مَنْ بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ يُجِيرُ وَلا يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ فَأَنَّى تُسْحَرُونَ} **وغير ذلك من الآيات الدالات على تحقق أنهم يقرون بهذا كله**، وأنه لم يدخلهم في التوحيد الذي دعاهم إليه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم. وعرفت أن التوحيد الذي جحدوه، وهو توحيد العبادة الذي يسميه المشركون في زماننا الاعتقاد، كما كانوا يدعون الله –سبحانه

وتعالى– ليلا ونهارا خوفا وطمعا. ثم منهم من يدعو الملائكة والأنبياء والصالحين لأجل صلاحهم وقربهم من الله عز وجل ليشفعوا لهم، ويدعو رجلا صالحا مثل اللات، أو نبيا مثل عيسى، وعرفت أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قاتلهم على ذلك، ودعاهم إلى إخلاص العبادة لله كما قال تعالى: {وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلا تَدْعُو مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَداً}. وقال تعالى: {لَهُ دَعْوَةُ الْحَقِّ وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ لا يَسْتَجِيبُونَ لَهُمْ بِشَيْءٍ} الآية.

وعرفت أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قاتلهم ليكون الدين كله لله، والدعاء كله لله، والذبح كله لله، والنذر كله لله، والاستغاثة كلها بالله، وجميع أنواع العبادات كلها لله، وعرفت أن إقرارهم بتوحيد الربوبية لم يُدخلهم في الإسلام، وأن قصدهم الملائكة والأنبياء والأولياء يريدون شفاعتهم والتقرب لله بذلك هو الذي أحل دماءهم وأموالهم، عرفت حينئذ التوحيد الذي دعت إليه الرسل وأبى عن الإقرار به المشركون.

وهذا التوحيد هو معنى قولك: لا إله إلا الله، فإن الإله عندهم هو الذي يُقصد لأجل هذه الأمور سواء كان ملكا أو نبيا، أو وليا أو شجرة، أو قبرا أو جنيا، **لم يريدوا أن الإله هو: الخالق الرازق المدبر، فإنهم يقرون أن ذلك لله وحده**، كما قدمت لك، وإنما يعنون بالإله: ما يعني المشركون في زماننا بلفظ السيد.

فأتاهم النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يدعوهم إلى كلمة التوحيد وهي: لا إله إلا الله. والمراد من هذه الكلمة: معناها لا مجرد لفظها، والكفار الجهال يعلمون أن مراد النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بهذه الكلمة هو: إفراد الله بالتعلق، والكفر بما يُعبد من دونه والبراءة منه، فإنه لما قال لهم قولوا: لا إله إلا الله، قالوا: {أَجَعَلَ الآلِهَةَ إِلَهاً وَاحِداً إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عُجَابٌ}.

فإذا عرفت أن جهال الكفار يعرفون ذلك؛ فالعجب ممن يدعي الإسلام، وهو لا يعرف من معنى هذه الكلمة ما عرفه جهال الكفار، بل يظن أن ذلك هو التلفظ بحروفها من غير اعتقاد القلب بشيء من المعاني، والحاذق منهم يظن أن معناها: لا يخلق ولا يرزق، ولا يحيي ولا يميت، ولا يدبر الأمر إلا الله. فلا خير في رجل، جهال الكفار أعلم منه بمعنى لا إله إلا الله.

Allah sent Muḥammad (ﷺ) to renew for them the religion of their forefather Abraham, and to inform them that this seeking of nearness and this belief is purely Allah's exclusive right: none of it is valid for a near angel or a commissioned prophet—let alone anyone else. **Yet those polytheists testified that Allah alone is the Creator, without partner; that none creates and none provides except Him; that none gives life and none causes death except Him; and that all seven heavens and all within them, and all seven earths and all within them, are His servants—under His disposal and subjugation.**

If you want proof that those polytheists whom the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) fought testified to this, then read Allah's statement: *"Say: Who provides for you from the heaven and the earth, or who controls hearing and sight, and who brings forth the living from the dead,*

and who directs the affair? They will say: Allah. So say: Will you not then take heed (of Him)?" (10:31). And read His statement: *"Say: To whom belongs the earth and whoever is in it, if you know? They will say: 'To Allah.' Say: 'Will you not then remember?' Say: 'Who is the Lord of the seven heavens and the Lord of the Mighty Throne?' They will say: 'To Allah.' Say: 'Will you not then be mindful?' Say: 'In whose hand is the dominion of everything—He grants protection, and none can grant protection against Him—if you know?' They will say: 'To Allah.' Say: 'Then how are you bewitched?'"* (23:84–89). **And the many other verses confirming that they acknowledged <u>all of this</u>**—yet it did not enter them into the Tawḥīd to which the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) called them.

<u>You will then recognise that the Tawḥīd they denied was Tawḥīd of Worship (*ʿIbādah*)</u>—what the polytheists of our time call "belief" (*Iʿtiqād*). In fact, they used to call upon Allah—exalted is He—night and day, in fear and hope. Yet, in spite of that, among them were those who called upon angels, prophets, and righteous persons on account of their righteousness and nearness to Allah, seeking their intercession; and among them were those who would call upon a righteous man such as al-Lāt, or a prophet such as Jesus. You will recognise that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) fought them over this, and called them to make worship sincerely for Allah alone, as Allah says*: "The places of worship are for Allah, so do not call upon anyone alongside Allah"* (72:18). And He says: *"To Him belongs the true call; and those they call upon besides Him do not respond to them in anything"* (13:14).

You will recognise that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) fought them so that the religion would be wholly for Allah; supplication wholly for Allah; sacrifice wholly for Allah; vows wholly for Allah; seeking relief (istighāthah) wholly from Allah; and every form of worship wholly for Allah. You will recognise that their acknowledgement of Tawḥīd of Lordship (Rubūbiyyah) did not enter them into Islam, while their turning to angels, prophets, and saints—seeking their intercession and treating that as a means of drawing near to Allah—was the reason their blood and property were deemed licit. Then, you will know the Tawḥīd to which the messengers called and which the polytheists refused to affirm.

This tawḥīd is the meaning of the statement "there is no god (*ilāh*) but Allah (*lā ilāha illā Allāh*). For, in their usage, an "ilāh" is that which is sought for these matters—whether an angel, a prophet, a saint, a tree, a grave, or a jinn. **They did not mean that "ilāh" is "the creator, provider, and governor", <u>because they already conceded that these belong to Allah alone</u>;** rather, by "ilāh" they meant what the polytheists of our time mean by the term "saint" (*sayyid*).

Thus the Prophet (ﷺ) came to them calling them to the word of tawḥīd—"lā ilāha illā Allāh"—and what is intended by this word is its meaning, not its mere utterance. Even

these ignorant disbelievers understood that the Prophet (ﷺ) intended by it: singling out Allah in one's attachment (*taʿalluq*), disbelieving in what is worshipped besides Him, and disavowing it. That is why, when he said to them, *"Say: lā ilāha illā Allāh," they replied: "Has he made the gods into one god? This is truly a strange thing!"* (38:5). If ignorant disbelievers knew this, then it is astonishing that one who claims Islam does not know of the meaning of this phrase that which ignorant disbelievers knew. Rather, he thinks that it is merely uttering its letters, even while the heart does not believe in any of its meanings. And the astute among them is the one who thinks that its meaning is: none creates and none provides, and none gives life and none causes death, and none governs the affair except Allah. There is no good in a man for whom ignorant disbelievers are more knowledgeable than he is regarding the meaning of lā ilāha illā Allāh.

Reference: Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Jawāhir al-Muḍiyyah li-Mujaddid al-Daʿwah al-Najdiyyah* (included in the *Majmūʿat al Rasāʾil wa l Masāʾil al Najdiyyah*), 3rd ed. (Riyadh: Dār al ʿĀṣimah, 1412 AH), pp. 4–6.

QUOTE 3

فاعلم أن الربوبية والألوهية يجتمعان ويفترقان، كما في قوله: {قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ مَلِكِ النَّاسِ إِلَهِ النَّاسِ} ، وكما يقال: رب العالمين، وإله المرسلين. وعند الإفراد يجتمعان، كما في قول القائل: من ربك؟ مثاله: الفقير والمسكين، نوعان في قوله: {إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ} ، ونوع واحد في قوله: {افترض عليهم صدقة تؤخذ من أغنيائهم فتُردّ إلى فقرائهم}. إذا ثبت هذا، فقول الملكين للرجل في القبر : من ربك؟ معناه: من إلهك؟ **لأن الربوبية التي أقرّ بها المشركون ما يمتحن أحد بها**، وكذلك قوله: {الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلاَّ أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ} ، وقوله: {قُلْ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ أَبْغِي رَبّاً} ، وقوله: {إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا} ، فالربوبية في هذا هي الألوهية، ليست قسيمة لها كما تكون قسيمة لها عند الاقتران. فينبغي التفطن لهذه المسألة.

Know that Lordship (rubūbiyyah) and divinity/worship (ulūhiyyah) sometimes coincide and sometimes diverge—such as in His statement: *"Say: I seek refuge in the Lord (Rabb) of mankind, the King of mankind, the God (Ilāh) of mankind"* (114:1–3); and as one says: "Lord of the worlds" (*Rabb al-ʿĀlamīn*) and "God of the messengers" (*Ilāh al-Mursalīn*) When either term is used on its own, it includes the meaning of the other—like the terms *fuqarāʾ* ("poor") and *masākīn* ("needy"): they appear as two categories in *"Charities are only for the fuqarāʾ and the masākīn..."* (9:60), yet as a single category in the ḥadīth *"He enjoined upon them a charity taken from their rich and distributed to their fuqarāʾ."*

Once this is established, then the two angels' question to a man in the grave—"*Who is your Lord (Rabb)?"*—means: *"Who is your God (Ilāh)?"* **For no one will be tested concerning the Lordship that is (already) acknowledged by the *mushrikūn*.** Likewise, in verses such as *"Those who were expelled from their homes without right, except that they said: 'Our Lord (Rabb) is Allah'"* (22:40), and *"Say: Shall I seek a lord (rabb) other than Allah?"* (6:164), and *"Indeed those who said: 'Our Lord (Rabb) is Allah,' then remained upright..."* (41:30), "Lordship" (*Rubūbiyyah*) here has the meaning of "divinity/worship"—it is not a parallel category alongside it, as it is when the two are mentioned together. One must therefore be conscious of this point.

Reference: Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Rasāʾil al-Shakhṣiyyah* (included in *Muʾallafāt al Shaykh Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb,* vol. 6), ed. Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān and Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ al-ʿAylaqī (Riyadh: Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University, n.d.), p. 17.

QUOTE 4

بل إذا قال له بعض المشركين: نحن نعرف أن رسول الله لا يملك لنفسه نفعاً ولا ضراً، وأن النافع الضار هو الله، يقول: جزاك الله خيراً، ويظن أن هذا هو التوحيد؛ **ونحن نعلّمه أكثر من سنة: أن هذا هو توحيد الربوبية الذي أقر به المشركون**. فالله الله في التفطن لهذه المسألة!

Indeed, when some polytheist says to him: "We know that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) possesses no power to bring benefit or harm even for himself, and that the One who brings benefit and harm is Allah," he replies, "May Allah reward you," imagining that this is Tawḥīd. **Yet we have been instructing him for over a year that this is Tawḥīd of Lordship (Rubūbiyyah) which even the *mushrikūn* accepted**. So, for Allah's sake—be acutely attentive to this matter!

Reference: Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Rasāʾil al-Shakhṣiyyah* (included in *Muʾallafāt al Shaykh Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb*, vol. 6), ed. Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān and Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ al-ʿAylaqī (Riyadh: Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University, n.d.), p. 21.

QUOTE 5

الأول: توحيد الربوبية، وهو الشهادة بأنه لا يخلق ولا يرزق ولا يحيي ولا يميت ولا يدبر الأمور إلا هو؛ وهذا حق، ولكن أعظم الكفار كفراً، الذين قاتلهم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، يشهدون به ولم يدخلهم في الإسلام، كما قال تعالى: {قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالأَرْضِ أَمَّنْ يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالأَبْصَارَ وَمَنْ يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَمَنْ يُدَبِّرُ الأَمْرَ فَسَيَقُولُونَ اللَّهُ فَقُلْ أَفَلا تَتَّقُونَ}.

فإذا تدبرت هذا الأمر العظيم، وعرفت أن الكفار يقرّون بهذا كله لله وحده لا شريك له، وأنهم إنما اعتقدوا في آلهتهم لطلب الشفاعة والتقرب إلى الله، كما قال تعالى: {وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلا يَنْفَعُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ هَؤُلَاءِ شُفَعَاؤُنَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ} ، وفي الآية الأخرى: {وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَى}.

The first [type] is Tawḥīd of Lordship (Rubūbiyyah): bearing witness that none creates, none provides, none gives life, none causes death, and none governs affairs except Him. It is true, but even the most entrenched of the disbelievers in their disbelief —whom the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) fought—bore witness to it, and it did not enter them into Islam, as Allah Most High says: *"Say: Who provides for you from the heaven and the earth, or who controls hearing and sight, and who brings forth the living from the dead, and who directs the affair? They will say: Allah. So say: Will you not then take heed (of Him)?"* (10:31).

So when you reflect upon this weighty matter and realise <u>that the disbelievers affirm all of this for Allah alone, without any partner</u>, and that they <u>only</u> had belief in their "gods" in order to seek intercession and a means of drawing near to Allah, as the Most High says: *"They worship, besides Allah, that which neither harms them nor benefits them, and they say: 'These are our intercessors with Allah.'"* (10:18) And in the other verse: *"Those who take protectors besides Him [say], 'We only worship them so that they may bring us nearer to Allah in closeness.'"* (39:3)

Reference: Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *al-Rasāʾil al-Shakhṣiyyah* (included in *Muʾallafāt al Shaykh Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb*, vol. 6), ed. Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān and Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ al-ʿAylaqī (Riyadh: Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University, n.d.), pp. 145–146.

QUOTE 6

الفصل الثاني: بيان الأدلة على أن المشركين الذين قاتلهم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مقرون بتوحيد الربوبية ولم يخرجهم ذلك من الشرك في العبادة فإذا أردت الدليل على أن هؤلاء الذين قاتلهم رسول الله – صلى الله عليه وسلم – يشهدون بهذا، فاقرأ قوله تعالى: {قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَمَّنْ يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَمَنْ يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَمَنْ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ فَسَيَقُولُونَ اللَّهُ فَقُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ} [يونس: ٣١] وقوله {قُلْ لِمَنِ الْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ – سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ – قُلْ مَنْ رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ – سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ – قُلْ مَنْ بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ يُجِيرُ وَلَا يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ – سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ فَأَنَّى تُسْحَرُونَ} [المؤمنون: ٨٤ – ٨٩] وغير ذلك من الآيات. فإذا تحققت أنهم مقرون بهذا ولم يدخلهم في التوحيد الذي دعاهم إليه رسول الله – صلى الله عليه وسلم –. وعرفت أن التوحيد الذي جحدوا هو توحيد العبادة الذي يسميه المشركون في زماننا (الاعتقاد) . كما كانوا يدعون الله سبحانه وتعالى ليلا ونهارا، ثم منهم من يدعو الملائكة لأجل صلاحهم وقربهم من الله ليشفعوا له أو يدعو رجلا صالحا مثل اللات، أو نبيا مثل عيسى.

وعرفت أن رسول الله – صلى الله عليه وسلم – قاتلهم على هذا الشرك ودعاهم إلى إخلاص العبادة لله وحده، كما قال الله تعالى: {فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا} [الجن: ١٨] ...

... وتحققت أن رسول الله – صلى الله عليه وسلم – قاتلهم ليكون الدعاء كله لله، والنذر كله لله، والاستغاثة كلها بالله، وجميع أنواع العبادات كلها لله. وعرفت أن إقرارهم بتوحيد الربوبية لم يدخلهم في الإسلام، وأن قصدهم الملائكة، والأنبياء، والأولياء، يريدون شفاعتهم والتقرب إلى الله بذلك هو الذي أحل دماءهم وأموالهم. عرفت حينئذ التوحيد الذي دعت إليه الرسل وأبى عن الإقرار به المشركون.

Chapter Two: Presenting the evidences that **the polytheists whom the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) fought affirmed Tawḥīd of Lordship (Rubūbiyyah), yet this affirmation did not remove them from polytheism in worship (*al-shirk fī 'l-'ibādah*).** If you want evidence that those whom the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) fought bore witness to this, then read Allah's statement: *"Say: Who provides for you from the heaven and the earth, or who controls hearing and sight, and who brings forth the living from the dead, and who directs the affair? They will say: Allah. So say: Will you not then take heed (of Him)?"* (10:31). And His statement: *"Say: To whom belongs the earth and whoever is in it, if you know? They will say: 'To Allah.' Say: 'Will you not then remember?' Say: 'Who is the Lord of the seven heavens and the Lord of the mighty Throne?' They will say: 'To Allah.' Say: 'Will you not then fear Him?' Say: 'In*

whose hand is the dominion of everything, and He grants protection and none can grant protection against Him, if you know?' They will say: 'To Allah.' Say: 'Then how are you bewitched?'" (23:84–89) among other verses.

Once you have established that they did indeed affirm this, and yet this affirmation did not admit them into the Tawḥīd to which the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) called them, then you will realise that the Tawḥīd they actually rejected was Tawḥīd of Worship (*ʿIbādah*)—what the polytheists of our own time call "belief" (*Iʿtiqād*). For they used to invoke Allah—exalted is He—night and day; yet among them were those who would invoke the angels, on account of their righteousness and nearness to Allah, seeking their intercession, or who would invoke a righteous man such as al-Lāt, or a prophet such as Jesus. You will also realise that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) fought them on account of this shirk and called them to devote worship exclusively to Allah alone, as Allah Most High says: "So do not call upon anyone alongside Allah" (Q 72:18)...

... And you will come to realise that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) fought them so that supplication would be entirely for Allah, vows would be entirely for Allah, seeking relief would be entirely from Allah, and every form of worship would be directed exclusively to Allah. You will also realise that their acknowledgement of Tawḥīd of Lordship (Rubūbiyyah) did not admit them into Islam. Rather, it was their directing themselves to angels, prophets, and saints—seeking their intercession and using them as a means of drawing near to Allah—that rendered their lives and property lawful. Only then will you know the Tawḥīd to which the messengers called, and which the polytheists refused to affirm.

Reference: Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *Kashf al-Shubuhāt*, 1st ed. (Riyadh: Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, Daʿwah and Guidance, 1418 AH), pp. 5-7.

QUOTE 7

الفصل السابع: الرد على أهل الباطل إجمالا وتفصيلا

وأنا أذكر لك أشياء مما ذكر الله في كتابه جوابا لكلام احتج به المشركون في زماننا علينا فنقول: جواب أهل الباطل من طريقين: مجمل، ومفصل.

أما المجمل فهو الأمر العظيم والفائدة الكبيرة لمن عقلها وذلك قوله تعالى: {هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ}

[آل عمران: 7] وقد صح عن رسول الله – صلى الله عليه وسلم – أنه قال: «إذا رأيتم الذين يتبعون ما تشابه منه فأولئك الذين سمى الله فاحذروهم» . مثال ذلك إذا قال بعض المشركين: {أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ} [يونس: 62] وأن الشفاعة حق، أو أن الأنبياء لهم جاه عند الله. أو ذكر كلاما للنبي – صلى الله عليه وسلم – يستدل به على شيء من باطله وأنت لا تفهم معنى الكلام الذي ذكره فجاوبه بقولك: إن الله ذكر في كتابه أن الذين في قلوبهم زيغ يتركون المحكم ويتبعون المتشابه، وما ذكرته لك من أن الله ذكر أن المشركين يقرون بالربوبية وأن كفرهم بتعلقهم على الملائكة والأنبياء والأولياء مع قولهم {هَؤُلَاءِ شُفَعَاؤُنَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ} [يونس: ١٨] هذا أمر محكم بين لا يقدر أحد أن يغير معناه . وما ذكرت لي أيها المشرك من القرآن أو كلام النبي – صلى الله عليه وسلم – لا أعرف معناه، ولكن أقطع أن كلام الله لا يتناقض، وأن كلام النبي – صلى الله عليه وسلم – لا يخالف كلام الله.

Chapter Seven: How to rebut the people of falsehood in general terms and in detail.
I shall mention to you certain things that Allah has mentioned in His Book that respond to some arguments made against us by the polytheists of our time. We say: there are two ways to reply to the people of falsehood: with a general reply and with a detailed reply.

As for the general reply, it is a momentous principle and a great benefit for whoever grasps it—namely, Allah's statement: *"It is He who has sent down to you the Book. In it are verses that are decisive—they are the foundation of the Book—and others that are ambiguous. As for those in whose hearts is deviation, they follow what is ambiguous of it, seeking discord and seeking a (false) interpretation of them."* (3:7) It is authentically established from the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) that he said: *"When you see those who follow what is ambiguous of it, then those are the ones whom Allah has named—so beware of them."*

An example of this is when one of the polytheists states: *"Unquestionably, the awliyāʾ of Allah—no fear shall be upon them, nor shall they grieve,"* [10: 62] or that intercession is true, or that the prophets have standing with Allah; or he cites some statement of the Prophet (ﷺ) as evidence for some of his falsehood, and you do not understand the meaning of the words he has cited.

Then respond by saying: Allah has stated in His Book that those in whose hearts is deviation abandon the clear, definitive verses and follow the ambiguous ones. Moreover, what I have told you that Allah has stated that the polytheists affirm Lordship (Rubūbiyyah), while their disbelief lies in their attachment (*taʿalluq*) to angels, prophets, and saints while saying, *"These are our intercessors with Allah"* (10:18), this is a clear, definitive matter (*muḥkam*) whose meaning no one can alter. And whatever you, O mushrik, have quoted to me from the Qurʾān or from the Prophet's (ﷺ) words, I do

not know its meaning. However, I am certain that Allah's speech does not contradict itself, and that the Prophet's (ﷺ) speech does not oppose Allah's speech.

Reference: Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *Kashf al-Shubuhāt*, 1st ed. (Riyadh: Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, Daʿwah and Guidance, 1418 AH), p. 15-17.

So, according to Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, his claim that the mushrikūn affirmed Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah is in fact one of the definitive teachings of the Qurʾān! If there is any doubt that this is what he intended, see what he has to say a page later (next quote):

QUOTE 8

وأما الجواب المفصل: فإن أعداء الله لهم اعتراضات كثيرة على دين الرسل يصدون بها الناس عنه منها قولهم: نحن لا نشرك بالله بل نشهد أنه لا يخلق ولا يرزق ولا ينفع ولا يضر إلا الله وحده لا شريك له، وأن محمدا – عليه السلام – لا يملك لنفسه نفعا ولا ضرا فضلا عن عبد القادر أو غيره ولكن أنا مذنب، والصالحون لهم جاه عند الله وأطلب من الله فجاوبه بما تقدم وهو: إن الذين قاتلهم رسول الله – صلى الله عليه وسلم – مقرون بما ذكرت، ومقرون أن أوثانهم لا تدبر شيئا، وإنما أرادوا الجاه والشفاعة، واقرأ عليه ما ذكره الله في كتابه ووضحه: فإن قال: هؤلاء الآيات نزلت فيمن يعبد الأصنام! كيف تجعلون الصالحين مثل الأصنام، أم كيف تجعلون الأنبياء أصناما فجاوبه بما تقدم.

فإنه إذا أقر أن الكفار يشهدون بالربوبية كلها لله، وأنهم ما أرادوا ممن قصدوا إلا الشفاعة، ولكن إذا أراد أن يفرق بين فعله وفعلهم بما ذكر فاذكر له أن الكفار منهم من يدعو الأصنام، ومنهم من يدعو الأولياء الذين قال الله فيهم: {أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ يَبْتَغُونَ إِلَى رَبِّهِمُ الْوَسِيلَةَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ} [الإسراء: ٥٧] ويدعون عيسى ابن مريم وأمه...

... فقل له: أعرفت أن الله كفر من قصد الأصنام؟ وكفر أيضا من قصد الصالحين، وقاتلهم رسول الله – صلى الله عليه وسلم –. فإن قال: الكفار يريدون منهم، وأنا أشهد أن الله هو النافع الضار المدبر لا أريد إلا منه، والصالحون ليس لهم من الأمر شيء ولكن أقصدهم أرجو من الله شفاعتهم. فالجواب إن هذا قول الكفار سواء بسواء واقرأ عليه قوله تعالى: {وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَى} [الزمر: 3] وقوله تعالى {وَيَقُولُونَ هَؤُلَاءِ شُفَعَاؤُنَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ} [يونس: 18] واعلم أن هذه الشبه الثلاث هي أكبر ما عندهم، فإذا عرفت أن الله وضحها لنا في كتابه وفهمتها فهما جيدا فما بعدها أيسر منها.

As for the detailed reply: the enemies of Allah have many objections against the religion of the messengers by which they turn people away from it. **Among them is their statement: "We do not associate anything with Allah. Rather, we testify that none creates, none provides, none benefits, and none harms except Allah alone, without**

partner; and that Muḥammad (ﷺ) does not possess for himself any benefit or harm—let alone ʿAbd al-Qādir or anyone else. But I am a sinner, and the righteous have standing with Allah, and I ask Allah [while seeking their intercession].”

So answer him with what has already preceded: that those whom the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) fought **affirmed exactly what you have mentioned**; and **they also affirmed that their idols govern nothing whatsoever, and that they only sought standing and intercession**. Recite to him what Allah has mentioned in His Book and made clear. If he says, “These verses were revealed concerning those who worship idols—how can you liken the righteous to idols, or how can you make the prophets into idols?”, then answer him with what has already preceded.

For once he has conceded that the disbelievers testified that all Lordship (Rubūbiyyah) belongs to Allah, and that they intended by those whom they sought nothing but intercession—yet he still wishes to distinguish between his practice and theirs on the basis of what he has mentioned—then remind him that among the disbelievers were those who invoked idols, and among them were those who invoked saints, concerning whom Allah said*: “Those whom they invoke seek a means of nearness to their Lord—whichever of them is nearer.”* (17:57) And they invoked Jesus son of Mary and his mother...

Then say to him: Have you realised that Allah declared as disbelievers those who directed themselves to idols? And He likewise declared as disbelievers those who directed themselves to the righteous—and the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) fought them.

If he says: “The disbelievers seek [things] from them, whereas I testify that Allah alone is the One who benefits and harms, the One who governs all affairs—I seek only from Him. The righteous have no share in the matter; I only direct myself to them, hoping for their intercession with Allah.”

Then the answer is: **this is the very statement of the disbelievers, exactly the same.** Recite to him Allah’s statement: *“Those who take protectors besides Him [say], ‘We only worship them so that they may bring us nearer to Allah in closeness.’”* (39:3) And His statement: *“They say, ‘These are our intercessors with Allah.’”* (10:18)

And know that these three specious arguments are the greatest [claims] they have. **So once you have recognised that Allah has clarified them for us in His Book, and you have understood them well, then whatever comes after them is easier than them.**

Reference: Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *Kashf al-Shubuhāt*, 1st ed. (Riyadh: Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, Daʿwah and Guidance, 1418 AH), pp. 18–20.

So, according to Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb:

(1) *The mushrikūn affirmed **all** Rubūbiyyah for Allah alone.*

(2) *The belief of the Jāhilī Arab pagans concerning their gods is exactly the same as the the belief of his Muslim opponents concerning their saints. The very explicit acknowledgement of the latter that all aspects of Rubūbiyyah belong completely and solely to Allah does not make them the least bit different from the Arab mushriks of Jāhiliyyah.*

(3) *This claim is clearly established by the Qur'ān!*